

WORLD AGRICULTURAL WEATHER HIGHLIGHTS

April 11, 2000

1 - UNITED STATES

During March, frequent, generally beneficial precipitation fell in key hard red winter wheat areas of the central and southern Plains. The precipitation arrived too late on the southern High Plains to provide significant relief to dryland winter wheat, but boosted summer crop pre-planting moisture. Meanwhile, areas from eastern Texas into the Southeast received frequent showers, benefiting pastures and newly planted summer crops, but failing to significantly dent long-term drought. Although occasional light precipitation dampened soft red winter wheat areas of the southern and eastern Corn Belt, mostly dry weather across the remainder of the Corn Belt left topsoil moisture limited and caused further long-term drought intensification. In California, mild and favorably dry weather benefited spring fieldwork. Near- to above-normal temperatures prompted winter wheat to break dormancy across the North and promoted rapid crop development elsewhere.

2 - SOUTH AMERICA

In northern soybean growing areas of southern Brazil, favorably drier weather prevailed during late March and early April, helping soybean harvesting. Heavy rain slowed early soybean harvesting in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil during late March, but benefited late-maturing soybeans. In central Argentina, slightly below-normal rainfall provided sufficient moisture for second-crop soybeans, but did not hamper corn and first-crop soybean harvesting.

3 - EUROPE

During March, sporadic showers favored spring grain planting and early development in England and France. In Spain, Portugal, and Italy, recent rainfall improved soil moisture, but more rain is needed for mostly jointing winter grains. Drier-than-normal weather persisted across southeastern Europe, further reducing moisture supplies as winter grains broke dormancy. Abundant precipitation delayed fieldwork from Germany and Austria eastward.

4 - NORTHWESTERN AFRICA

Drought conditions continued through March in Morocco and Algeria, producing severe stress on reproductive winter grains and reducing yield prospects. In Tunisia, consistent, light rain early in the growing season gave way to warm, dry conditions, leading to increased stress on winter grains.



USDA/OCE - World Agricultural Outlook Board
Joint Agricultural Weather Facility

*(More details are available in the Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletin.
Subscription information may be obtained by calling (202) 720-7917.)*

5 - FSU-WESTERN

In March, above-normal precipitation in Ukraine and southern Russia increased moisture reserves but hampered early-spring fieldwork. Since April 1, a strong warming trend raised soil temperatures to favorable levels for spring grain emergence in Ukraine and southern Russia and brought overwintering crops out of dormancy. Winter grains remained dormant in northern Russia, although mild weather melted snow cover.

6 - SOUTH ASIA

During March, near-normal temperatures aided winter wheat and oilseed development across Pakistan and India. Scattered, mostly light showers benefited crops in north-central India. Locally heavy rain in Bangladesh increased irrigation reserves for rice.

7 - EASTERN ASIA

In the North China Plain, above-normal March temperatures favored greening wheat, but increased irrigation demands. Spring wheat planting began across southern and central Manchuria in late March. Across central China (Hubei, southern Anhui, and Jiangsu), below-normal March rainfall reduced moisture for vegetative winter wheat and rapeseed. Near- to above-normal March rainfall boosted moisture supplies for winter crops and early rice transplanting across Sichuan and interior southern China. Mostly below-normal rainfall prevailed across the extreme southern coastal provinces.

8 - SOUTHEAST ASIA

In March, near to slightly below-normal rainfall across Java, Indonesia favored rice maturation and harvesting, while below-normal rainfall reduced moisture supplies for oil palm across interior Sumatra. Near-normal rainfall maintained moisture supplies for oil palm across peninsular Malaysia. Above- to much-above-normal rainfall slowed fieldwork and caused local flooding across peninsular Thailand and most of the Philippines. March showers increased moisture supplies for winter rice in northern and southern Vietnam.

9 - SOUTH AFRICA

Above-normal rainfall benefited filling corn and sugarcane, and increased topsoil moisture for winter wheat planting, which is typically in full swing during May.

10 - AUSTRALIA

Showery weather slowed drydown and harvesting of cotton and sorghum in New South Wales and sections of southern Queensland. Along the coast, tropical storm activity resulted in some flooding and crop damage in the northern sugarcane areas. In Western Australia, unseasonably heavy rainfall increased moisture reserves for the upcoming winter grain crop.